



Media Advisory

Ministerial Meeting of LLDCs on Trade and Transport

Achieving the SDGs in Landlocked Developing Countries through Connectivity and Trade Facilitation

Astana, Kazakhstan, 16 - 17 May 2018

WHAT: The Office of the High-Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), jointly with the Government of Kazakhstan, are organizing a Ministerial Meeting of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) on trade and transport. The meeting will assess the key issues in transport, transit cooperation, trade and trade facilitation and identify recommendations for cooperation towards implementing the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

WHO: The event will bring together ministers and high-level officials from Landlocked developing countries, transit countries and developing partners, in addition to relevant representatives of UN system, international and regional organizations, financial institutions and private sector, and Heads of UN agencies.

Key speakers will include the High Representative of UN-OHRLLS, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, H.E. Mr. Zhenis Kassymbek, Minister of Investments and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan; H.E. Ambassador Federico Alberto González Franco, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay; Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; H.E. Mr. Albert M. Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, African Union Commission and Mr. Yonov Frederick Agah, Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

WHEN: Wednesday 16 - Thursday 17 of May 2018.

WHERE: Day 1 of the meeting (16 May) will be held at Marriott Astana Hotel, 2 Dostyk Str., Astana, Kazakhstan.

Day 2 of the meeting (17 May) will be held at the Astana Economic Forum venue – Congress Center.

WHY: To review the progress made by the LLDCs on transport, trade facilitation and trade, structural economic transformation and the related SDGs and identify the challenges; to share knowledge, experiences and innovative approaches of promoting national and regional connectivity; to identify recommendations and opportunities for enhancing trade, trade facilitation, structural economic transformation, and transport infrastructure development and maintenance in LLDCs; and to increase awareness of the Ministers and senior officials of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda and their implementation.

Opportunities for the press:

A press conference will be held on the first day of the Ministerial Meeting in Astana featuring high level officials from UN-OHRLLS, the Host Country and the Chair of LLDCs.

Background:

Lack of territorial access to the sea, isolation and remoteness from world markets and high transport and transit costs impose serious constraints on the overall socio-economic development and trade competitiveness of the 32 landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). LLDCs have to pay more than double what coastal countries incur as well as require about double the time taken by transit countries to export and import their goods. The high trade costs erode the competitive edge of the LLDCs as well as the trade volumes resulting in an enormous negative impact on their overall sustainable development. They are also not able to fully tap on the benefits of trade such as investment finance, technology and services needed to further improve productive capacity in agriculture, industry and services that are needed for structural transformation of economies. As a result, the level of development in LLDCs is, on average, 20% lower than what it would be were they not landlocked.

Further information:

[Information Note](#)

[Concept Note](#)

[Background Note Session 1](#) ; [Background Note Session2](#) ; [Background Note Session 3](#)

[LLDCs Website](#)

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